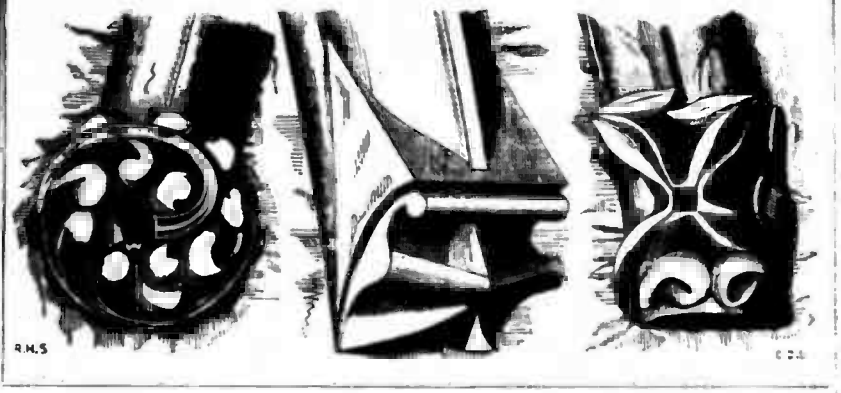
HOOD-MOULD TERMINATIONS.



HOOD-MOULD TERMINATIONS.

THE annexed sketches represent hood-mould terminations from Little Wenham Priory, Suffolk, one-fourth the real size.

R. H. S.

THE VENTILATION OF THE HOUSE OF COMMONS.

ALTHOUGH the newspapers have teemed with the discussions upon the failure of Dr. Reid's attempt to ventilate the House of Commons, and although Dr. Reid has been allowed to make an *ex parte* statement, throwing the whole of the blame on Sir Charles Barry, without giving him the opportunity of reply, I have not yet seen in any publication a statement of the facts sufficiently lucid to enable the public to judge of the case upon its real merits. Having had constant opportunities during the last three years of watching all the arrangements connected with this question, I beg to lay before you in as concise a manner as possible a statement of facts, upon the principal points to which Dr. Reid, in his evidence before the House of Commons, on February 6th, 1852, attributes his failure.

Since the year 1846, when the House of Lords "subverted" Dr. Reid's plans, and confined the exercise of his talents exclusively to the House of Commons, Sir Charles Barry considered it necessary to have the whole of Dr. Reid's requisitions conveyed to him in writing; and the extent to which they have been carried out may be judged of by the fact that upwards of 57,000*l.* have been expended on his plans alone, and further, from the statement of Lord Seymour in the House of Commons last Wednesday week (who, as the official superior both of architect and ventilator, may be supposed to possess an accurate knowledge of the subject), "that in no case had any written requisition of Dr. Reid's been disregarded," we may, I think, fairly assume that every facility to carry out his plans has been afforded him, and that the whole of his demands have been complied with, with the single exception of the removal of the paint (*not* offensive oil, as he stated) from the perforated iron floor of the House.

This paint, of which the Doctor makes one of the great points contributing to his failure, has been laid on *more than eighteen months*; and I will ask any practical man, what quantity of "offensive oil" can remain to contaminate air passing in contact with it after that time; and, as a further proof of the small value of this objection, I may mention that the floor of the House of Lords, upon the ventilation of which not a dissentient voice has been heard since its completion, was coated in a similar manner.

Another matter to which Dr. Reid attributes his failure, is the imperfect ventilation of the gas-lamps. These, which are constructed on Faraday's patent, I have myself tested, by partly removing the talc cover over the top of the glass, and I have in every case found a strong current inwards, incontrovertibly proving that the products of combustion are entirely carried off, without contaminating the atmosphere of the House.

If Dr. Reid imagines he can quietly draw down his air, without its being reversed by the rarified column produced over these lamps, he proves the truth of his own statement, "that he might as well be asked to control the air of the Bay of Biscay."

This is *indeed* "a practical difficulty under which he labours."

The imperfection of the drains is another matter complained of, although the Doctor must have known from the plans, the purpose, and position of each. A portion of them were even put in by workmen under his directions, and from his own drawings. It is, indeed, true that had not the greatest possible care been taken to prevent offensive matter from entering these drains, and also in trapping them effectually, the Doctor *would* have brought about the result of which he complains, by blowing his steam and hot water into them, the effect of which, in creating offensive vapours, every practical man is fully aware of.

Another "great practical difficulty" that the Doctor advances is, that although the area which was committed to his charge to ventilate was defined architecturally "by walls at one place and walls at another, it could not be defined as a pneumatic boundary, for there were no means taken to exclude the external atmosphere where the architectural boundary terminated."

I am quite sure, Sir, that your readers will consider that this, instead of being an obstacle, was one of the greatest advantages to his system; for had his "pneumatic boundary" been defined, as he wished it to be, by the external atmosphere, he would have been subject to the continual fluctuations in temperature, varying from 20 deg. to 80 deg. Fahr.; he would *then* have been "subjected to currents on every side, which blow hot and cold air;" whereas, being surrounded as he is, by a perfectly ventilated area, capable of being maintained at any required temperature, an unlimited command is given him over the temperature of the currents of which he complains.

Another practical difficulty under which the Doctor states he labours, is "from innumerable chimneys, that pour forth volumes of smoke into the surrounding lobbies. Torrents of smoke come in, so that the House sits in an atmosphere of carbonic acid."

Although a few of the chimneys surrounding the House lobby did at first smoke, immediate and effectual measures were taken to prevent a recurrence of the evil, which could and ought to have been remedied before the sitting of the House, had the Doctor's system been in full operation.

The foregoing are the principal faults that Dr. Reid in his evidence alleges have prevented the carrying out to perfection his system of ventilation, but he has *entirely omitted* a most important fact, viz. that for the purpose of propelling a sufficient current of air through the House, a steam-engine was provided, and fixed under his directions, connected with a large fan, which engine was *obliged to be removed in consequence of the great noise made in its working being heard over the House.*

Your readers will be able to judge from *which* of the causes the failure of the ventilation has arisen; whether from those to which Dr. Reid attributes it, viz. to the lamps, drains, oil, chimneys, &c. or from the failure of the steam-engine, which he had provided to propel the current of air through the House, and which, although abandoned by him, was passed unnoticed in his evidence.

Again, can it be credited, that after receiving for superintending the ventilation of this comparatively small chamber, since the year 1846, a large salary, together with a staff of 1,300*l.* per annum, to which, his original assistance being found inadequate, he demanded and obtained the addition of three engineers, he should without previous protest, although he states "he anticipated those defects," have allowed the House of Commons to meet, and after nearly stifling them with the impurity of the atmosphere, should, upon being examined, coolly tell them that for 200*l.* or 300*l.* he could "remedy the great defects in two days"!!!

Further, can it be believed, that Dr. Reid, after replying (to one question of Lord Seymour) that he was a "medical man and not an architect," and to another, that he was a "medical man and not an engineer," should ask the House of Commons to give him entire control over the architect, whose system of ventilation, carried throughout the remainder of the building, has been perfectly satisfactory and comparatively inexpensive?

In conclusion, I beg to ask whether the foregoing facts do not prove, either

That Dr. Reid's system is a failure in principle; or,

That from his want of practical knowledge he has been unable to apply it to the building; or,

That he has, from some unaccountable motive, purposely failed. WM. JEAKES.

*** We insert Mr. Jeakes's statement, because we know he is intimately conversant with the particulars, but we must reserve any opinion as to the success, or otherwise, of Sir Charles Barry as a ventilator. It requires a large stomach to swallow a charge of 200,000*l.* for such a purpose. We propose a personal examination next week.

ON THE ARCHITECTURAL DISTINCTION BETWEEN CATHEDRAL AND PAROCHIAL CHURCHES.*

THE lowest class of structures which seem to me to approximate in any degree to the character of a minster, are certain moderate-sized cross churches without aisles, but with four arms of the full height, and with the predominant central tower. Those that I am going to mention were actually conventual, and I think there is something about them which at once indicates the fact. Such is Leonard Stanley, in Gloucestershire, a perfect Norman shell, with later alterations harmonised with the original work, in a manner unusually careful and ingenious. Such is Llanbadarn-fawr, in Cardiganshire; such seem to have been several other of the smaller Welsh monastic churches, as the priories at Haverford-west and St. Dogmael's, though these seem to have introduced a much greater degree of ornament. At St. Dogmael's, some parts were vaulted, as was also intended in the choir at Leonard Stanley. At Pil, near Milford Haven, there stands a very fine fragment,—a single arch of a central tower, which, to judge from such slight evidence, would seem to be the remains of a church quite of the same type as Stanley or Llanbadarn.

Something of the same kind may be traced in Lapley Church, Staffordshire, which was also conventual, but a rather more elaborate tower takes away somewhat from the simplicity of the type, and the present aspect of the building is certainly not improved by the demolition of its transepts. The same character possibly also existed at Stanton Harcourt and Cholsey, but later alterations have done much to destroy it. In all, or most, of these churches, we may observe the great proportionate length given to the western limb.

I am not sure that there is not a nearer approach to the conventual idea in these aisle-

* See p. 6, *ante*.

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